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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000065

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [MOPS](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: NKUNDA LOYALISTS "MIXING" WITH REGULAR CONGOLESE  
MILITARY UNITS

REF: A. 06 KINSHASA 1832 AND PREVIOUS

[1](#)B. KINSHASA 6

Classified By: PolOff CBrown, reasons 1.4 b/d.

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: There is as yet no confirmation of reports that renegade General Laurent Nkunda will be granted asylum in another country as part of an agreement with the GDRC. The Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) has begun mixing pro-Nkunda soldiers in North Kivu province with other, "loyal" non-integrated brigades. At least three "mixed" brigades will be created. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Neither the FARDC nor MONUC's North Kivu Brigade have been able to confirm reports that the GDRC has struck a deal with renegade General Laurent Nkunda that would grant him asylum in South Africa. Colonel Delphin Kahimbi, the deputy commander of the 8th Military Region (North Kivu), told us he was aware of the reports, but did not have details on any possible deal -- though he quickly added that exile would be the best option for Nkunda.

[1](#)3. (C) Victor Ngezayo, a North Kivu businessman and Tutsi politician with ties to Nkunda, said Nkunda was offered exile in South Africa, but rejected the deal. Ngezayo claimed Nkunda has not received "sufficient guarantees" that the population of North Kivu (i.e., the minority Tutsi community) will be protected and that security can be maintained in the region. He said Nkunda believes if he leaves North Kivu, the GDRC and the FARDC will target "the people he is trying to protect." (Comment: While close to Nkunda, Ngezayo is prone to exaggerate the threat to the region's Tutsis. His comments are often aimed at advancing his own agenda. End comment.)

[1](#)4. (C) Several weeks of negotiations between 8th Military Region commander General Louis Ngizo, Nkunda, and the leaders of the generally pro-Nkunda 81st and 83rd Brigades have resulted in an agreement to begin a "mixage" of these troops with loyal FARDC units -- combining the rank-and-file and command elements of both brigades into one unit. Discussions among this group began after attacks in November and December by the 81st/83rd on FARDC positions in North Kivu (ref A), which subsequently led to talks between Nkunda and the DRC's Air Force commander General John Numbi in Rwanda (ref B). Details of the Numbi-Nkunda talks remain largely unknown, but paved the way for the dialogue that has led to the current "mixage." Kahimbi said Ngizo decamped to Nkunda-controlled territory in North Kivu for two weeks to hammer out the logistical, legal and hierarchical details involving in combining of forces.

[1](#)5. (C) Kahimbi said negotiators made a conscious decision to combine the 81st/83rd with the non-integrated 110th, 116th

and 1st Reserve Brigades, which were deployed to North Kivu from neighboring South Kivu in December, following the fighting earlier in the month. Kahimbi said Nkunda and his advisers consider these units "acceptable" as they have demonstrated no "anti-Tutsi" activity and are not tied to the region -- unlike other FARDC Integrated Brigades currently deployed in North Kivu.

¶16. (SBU) Kahimbi said about 600 soldiers of the 83rd -- many of whom are loyal to Nkunda -- began moving January 17 from their positions in Kitchanga and Sake, northwest of Goma, to a transit point in Jtn, about 30 miles north of Goma. In Jtn, they joined about 1,000 troops from the 110th, based in Tongo, for "mixage." The mixing of these brigades was completed January 20 in Jtn, marked by a ceremony presided by Numbi and FARDC Land Forces commander General Gabriel Amisi. The new brigade was re-christened "Alpha."

¶17. (SBU) Kahimbi and MONUC military officials monitoring the "mixage" said the process has gone smoothly thus far. MONUC military spokesman Major Ajay Dalal told us there have been no security incidents since forces from any of the affected brigades began relocating. Kahimbi added that the majority of those forces heading for "mixage" -- particularly those of the 81st and 83rd, are in favor of creating the new brigades.

¶18. (SBU) Kahimbi said the mixed brigade -- consisting of three battalions -- will conduct patrols to the west and north of Goma where both the 81st/83rd and loyal FARDC troops had been stationed. The goal, he said, is to build confidence between soldiers of both groups and to work jointly to provide security in the area. The first mixed brigade will be led by Colonel Mosala, commander of the 110th Brigade. His

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second-in-command will be Colonel Kabundi of the 83rd Brigade.

¶19. (SBU) At least two other mixed brigades will be formed during the process. Kahimbi said the next one will be composed of members of the 116h Brigade and the pro-Nkunda 81st Brigade. These two groups began "mixing" January 21, according to Kahimbi, around Jumba near the town of Rutshuru. The second mixed brigade will reportedly be commanded a member of the 81st Brigade, with his deputy coming from the 116th. A third mixed brigade will be created from the loyal 1st Reserve Brigade and the 81st/83rd stationed in the area around Runyoni, where they attacked government positions in December. Kahimbi said a fourth mixed brigade could be created if there are any remaining "un-mixed" soldiers from the 81st/83rd and other non-integrated FARDC brigades.

¶10. (C) All new mixed brigades will initially be stationed in North Kivu, according to Kahimbi. He noted that there is an "excessive" number of troops in the province following the FARDC's build-up in December. Some brigades, Kahimbi conceded, will eventually be redeployed back to South Kivu, northern North Kivu, or elsewhere in the DRC. He said plans have not yet been made as to where any of these new brigades will be sent, or when or whether they will be transformed into "integrated" brigades, as has been required of all other FARDC units.

¶11. (C) Kahimbi warned that the security threat posed by the Nkunda loyalists has not yet been eliminated. He said there are those close to Nkunda strongly opposed to "mixage." Kahimbi said Bosco Ntaganda, a Nkunda associate who is linked to militia groups in Ituri District -- has reportedly been threatening soldiers from the 81st and 83rd who cooperate with the "mixage" process. Kahimbi admitted Bosco and others like him could ultimately undermine efforts to combine the units and secure the region.

¶12. (C) Kahimbi said the GDRC is not inclined to start "negotiations" with Bosco, particularly because of his rumored involvement with Peter Karim and other Ituri militia leaders. Kahimbi denied Bosco has been offered exile or

asylum in a third country. He added that Bosco is being sought by an international arrest warrant, and contributed to the killing of MONUC peacekeepers in Ituri. Kahimbi added the GDRC may be willing to revisit the issue with him in the future should he show "good faith," but the government is "not there yet."

¶13. (C) Comment: The "mixage" is a good start in neutralizing the security threat posed by Nkunda loyalists within the 81st and 83rd Brigades. The process will be in jeopardy, though, so long as Nkunda's status is not dealt with immediately and clearly. The "mixage" process, allowing the 81st and 83rd troops to remain in their home province, is different from "brassage," which required all other troops to integrate themselves in a national army for posting anywhere in the DRC. Future stability will also depend on eventual deployment of the new units outside of the Kivus while the central government still provides security to North Kivu's Tutsi minority. End comment.  
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